It will be remembered, however, that a similar usage was noted by Steiner among the Kung Bushmen, the underlying belief here being that if the child were placed too soon at its mother's breast both would die. Whether this is also the Hottentot belief cannot, of course, be said.

Immediately after the birth the mother is covered as warmly as possible, so that she perspires. Under this cover she must remain for several days, and only the skin on which she is lying is occasionally changed. It is not till the seventh, or even the tenth, day that she is able to resume her normal occupations.[1] During this period of seclusion she must carefully refrain from touching cold water. Schultze mentions that on one occasion, when a woman who had just given birth was bleeding profusely and had even fainted several times, a white woman present wished to apply to her a cloth soaked in cold water. Thereupon all the Hottentot attendants immediately left the hut, holding the white woman responsible for the death of the patient, which they expected would inevitably follow as a result of her contact with the water. Hahn mentions also [2] that at a child's birth a fire is made in the hut with a fire-drill. Steel, flint, or matches may not be used for this purpose. This fire is to be maintained until the navel of the child is healed, and the umbilical cord fallen off; and nothing may be cooked or roasted on it. If these points are not strictly observed, the child will die. The end of the seclusion period is marked by a feast, provided by the father.

Of the ceremonies accompanying the end of the seclusion and the resumption of her ordinary tasks by the mother we have but fragmentary details. Both in Walvis Bay and in Fransfontein Mrs. Hoernlé was told that babies are taken into the first rainstorm occurring after they are in a position to be removed from the hut, i.e. after the navel cord has fallen off. In Walvis Bay, among the Topnaars, it is taken out and turned over and over in the rain by the mother or the grandmother, "so that it will know the rain and not be frightened of it." According to a Dutch informant, the baby is taken out by one of the women who has been present at the birth, and is laid on a piece of skin in the rain. The old woman jumps over the child and back again; then lifts it up, tosses it this way and that in the rain, and says: "I toss you in the rain." This is done, "so that the rain will not hurt the baby"; it is the baby's introduction to the

[1] From other statements it appears that the period of seclusion lasts until the baby's navel cord has fallen off.
[2] Op. cit., 77.

2: Schapera E-4, 5 (no date) 1930
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Nama
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852 source of water. It seems also that the mother is ceremonially reintroduced to water in the same way as in the remarriage ceremony, except that here it is the older women who have looked after her during her confinement who free her from all her restrictions.[1]

844 184 Kolb's description of the birth customs among the Cape Hottentots agrees in the main with that given above for the Naman, but contains a few additional details.[2] When the time for delivery is at hand, the patient is assisted by two or three of her near female relatives, as well as by the midwife of the kraal, who is specially summoned. As soon as the latter enters the hut the husband must leave it, and may not enter [783] again until the birth is over. Should he do so, he becomes "unclean", and must purify himself by slaughtering a sheep for a special cleansing meal in which the other men of the kraal take part.

845 757 If the birth goes easily, all is well. When, however, it is unusually protracted, the women make a decoction of finely cut tobacco and cow's milk, or, where the latter is not available, sheep's milk; strain it, and allow the milk to cool. It is then handed to the patient to drink, in the belief that it will increase the pain and thus lead to a speedy delivery, or else cause strong vomiting which at the same time expels 844 the child. The new-born baby may not be cleaned with water, which they say is "unhealthy". Instead it is rubbed all over with moist cowdung; when this has dried and fallen off, the baby is washed in [829] the juice of the Hottentot fig (*Mesembrianthemum edule*), which will make it nimble and fleet of foot; then smeared all over with freshly-melted sheep fat or butter, and finally powdered with *buchu*.

The afterbirth is buried in a hole in the ground, together with the blood flowing from the woman. This is all collected on the skin upon which she has lain from the beginning, and on which she must continue to lie as long as the blood flows from her. When the flow ceases, and the woman can or may arise, the skin is wrapped up together with the blood, etc., upon it, and is buried, so that no sorcerer may get at it and use it to work evil magic. The umbilical cord is 846 bound with a piece of sheep's sinew until it falls off; there is no mention of any special usage connected with it.

Before meeting again after the birth, husband and wife must both rub their bodies down anew with cowdung, smear themselves with

[1] Hoernlé, "The Social Value of Water among the Naman," *S. Afr. J. Sci.*, xx (1923), 524, 525–6.

[2] *Vergeliges der Caaps Hoffnung*, 64–6; cf. Germann, "Bilder aus der sexuellen Ethnologie der Hottentotten," *Geschlecht und Gesellschaft*, xii, 324–6; Graevenbrock, "Uit den Ouden Tijd," 2–4 *passim*.

6: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1923
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white people and who told me that they were now sickly, and never got any children, because they had been made to work with cold water, when they should not have done so.

The sea as the greatest accumulation of cold water is very dangerous for people in an unstable condition. I was given a very graphic description of a tragedy that occurred not so very long ago. Three young girls were walking along the beach at Swakopmund very happily and merrily, when all of a sudden the sea became angry and seemed to be on top of them. Two of the girls calling out, "Who here has her period?" rushed up the beach in safety, the third just had time to shout out, "I have," when she was dragged under by the waves and drowned! The woman who told me this lives inland from Walvis Bay. The other woman who had been with her was afterwards my cook far north in Franzfontein, and she confirmed the story of the drowning. In these degenerate days, the Naman find it very inconvenient to have their women incapacitated so often and unable to attend to their daily tasks, and they have discovered that for most women it is quite safe to do these tasks, only they must not touch cold water. It is only certain women who are said to be !Khai !na, forbidden or dangerous, who cannot do these things, and a sure way of finding out is to take a woman along the seashore when first she kharus. If she is !Khai !na, the sea will rush out towards her, and she will have to take great care not to be drawn in. The woman to whom this happens must not dare to do anything during her period, for she would be a danger to all who touched her food, or the milk she had milked. For there is this great difference between most things a woman is forbidden to do, and the touching of cold water. Cold water she can never harm, it will always harm her, be she !kai !na or not, if she uses it when she should not, whereas it is she who pollutes other things that she touches and makes them !nôu, taboo. Thus, if a girl should kharú out in the veld when she and her companions are gathering roots and berries, her companions contrive turn by turn to carry her back to the kraal, for if she walks among the bushes she will scorch them, the succulent roots will shrivel up, and the leaves wither from the bushes. If she milks a cow, its milk will turn to blood. (I am told that a cow does sometimes give a reddish fluid instead of milk.) If she cooks a meal those who eat it, especially men, will be very ill. Always after a girl has been reintroduced to the water, she and the old woman take a branch which they dip into a bucket of water and scatter it over the whole kraal, bushes, pens, sheep, goats and cattle.

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We have dealt now with the cases in which water is a protection against dangers, and with those in which water itself is dangerous. There are just two other little rites connected with water which seem to me a little different.

Both in Walvis Bay and in Franzfontein I was told that babies are taken out into the first rainstorm which occurs after they are in a position to be removed from the hut, that is, after

6: Hoernlé E-5 (1912-1913)1923
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823 852 the navel string has fallen off. In Walvis Bay the baby is taken out and turned over and over in the rain by the mother or grandmother, so that it will know the rain and not be frightened of it, I was told. An Africander woman gave me a rather different account. The baby is taken out by one of the women who has been present at the birth, and is laid on a piece of skin in the rain. The old woman jumps over the child and back again; then lifts it up, tossing it this way and that in the rain, saying, "Hei-a Hei-a Tú gaba tsi" (I toss you in the rain). This is done, said the old woman, so that the rain will not hurt the baby. It is the baby's introduction to the source of water.

823 881 [842] Of another type of case I have never been able to get information myself among the tribes I have visited, but Theophilus Hahn writes: "The girl or girls who have become of age must, after the festival, run about in the first thunderstorm, but they must be quite naked, so that the rain which pours down washes the whole body. The belief is that they will get fruitful and have a large offspring." He continues: "I have on three occasions witnessed this running in the thunder rain, when the roaring of the thunder was deafening and the whole sky appeared to be one continual flash of lightning. This was among the !Gami /Nun; among the gei /Khauas at //Nuis, and among the //Ogeis on the banks of the !Kham River."*

These three tribes I have never visited myself and do not know if this ceremony used to take the place of the usual method of reintroducing the girls to water, or whether it was additional. I rather think it must have been additional, otherwise the girls would be prevented from using water over too long periods in many cases. The underlying motive of the ceremony seems the same as in the many we have noticed. The girls being now full members of society, the rain will protect them and help them to attain the full life of their new status.

823 182 Such are the Nama ceremonies connected with water. I have tried to show that they are all intelligible and form an harmonious whole if we realise that water is, of all the essentials of a social life, the most difficult for this primitive people to provide, that it is, therefore, one of their most important social possessions, and is invested with great power, essentially protective and wholesome so long as social life runs its normal course, but exceedingly dangerous to all the forces which threaten society, or to the members of the society themselves when the social bonds are loosened.

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* *Tsuni //Goam*, p. 87.

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot
South Nguni FX17

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water is according to the season of the year, hot in winter, cold in summer. Then the husband calls together his kith and kin of both sexes and receives them in his hut. When they are all seated the matter of a name for the child is broached. First he asks his wife; as a rule he expresses his agreement with her, and after him they all do likewise, praising the wit of the young mother. They then greet the child by his new name, pray for happiness for him and his parents, and pass the day in celebrating the birth.[33])

A certain native of my acquaintance has gotten the name of *Gauda* (in Latin *dama*, or buck)[34]) from the following circumstance. On the day on which he was born, his mother being very anxious about food, his father came home from the hunt laden with buck. The hungry guests were fed upon the flesh, the newborn babe was swaddled in the skins. Impressed by the timely relief, his mother improved the occasion by naming the boy *Gauda*. There is a tale of another woman who gave birth to a child in the middle of the summer, when the sun with its rays most scorches earth and cattle, so that the earth is parched and the udders of the cattle are empty of milk. The young mother, beholding her own dry breasts, was touched with pity, and gave to her daughter the name *Bithathe*, a word compounded of *Bi*, milk, and *Thathe*, lack. Surely a very happy choice of name.

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Any father who is well stocked with cattle again offers sacrifice on the occasion of a birth; the mother and babe are smeared in the fat of the victim, which is warmed by the priest; and they are sprinkled with bochu in the manner described. After the birthday feast the husband takes himself off for a week or two, and until the infant has been taken from the breast or weaned, he does not sleep again with his wife even if it be for a whole year.[35]) He always sleeps away from her when she is with child. In the meantime he goes with concubines, paying homage to a roving love, for these natives generally have several wives, each living separately in her own hut, looking after the household and scrupulously obedient to her husband's commands. They vie with one another in flattering him with word and look, and he embraces now one, now another, for a space of two nights or three, according to the passion,

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lota, but to be derived from the account given by the "Stavenisse" crew of the AmaXhosa. They say: "As soon as a woman is confined in childbed, her husband must stay away from the hut for 13 to 14 days, and not sleep with his wife as long as she is suckling the child, even if it be for a year. In the meantime he must console himself with his other wives" (Molsbergen, *op. cit.* III, 84).